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United Nations Food and Agriculture Agencies in Rome
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee. And thank you, Senators Nelson and Rubio, for your kind introductions.

I am honored to be the President's nominee for the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture. I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Clinton for the confidence they have shown in nominating me for this important post.

If confirmed by the Senate, I would consider it a great privilege to serve the American people in pursuit of goals I know we all hold dear: alleviating hunger and helping the world's poor lift themselves out of poverty through agricultural development. The United States has many important interests before the UN food and agriculture agencies in Rome, and I am eager to help protect and advance them. If confirmed, I am committed to helping the U.S. Mission, which has representatives from the Department of State, USDA, and USAID, advance our national interest in a whole of government approach while helping to make agriculture a major force for poverty alleviation around the world.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Committee, I believe there has never been a more important time for U.S. leadership on food and agriculture issues within the UN agencies in Rome and around the world. This is a time of unprecedented progress in food and nutrition security, and I want to do my part to sustain the momentum and help ensure that we make the most out of our historic opportunity. At the same time, the ongoing lack of food security in regions like the Horn of Africa and the Sahel continues to drive instability and slow progress in the

development of these areas. With both the opportunity for accelerated progress and lingering challenges in mind, I appreciate this opportunity to share my views on how I would contribute to the fight against hunger, if confirmed.

I hope you will agree that my experience prepares me well for the responsibilities of the position for which I have been nominated. I have spent most of my career in non-profit service, and from 2001 until 2011 I worked to help develop and promote public policies focused on enabling the world's poor to lift themselves out of poverty.

At the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation I established and led the organization's East Coast office in Washington, D.C. for six years. In this role, I initiated and managed our collaboration with many of the key actors in the global development field. After we concluded that mobilizing public support for smart policies could be as important as making smart programmatic investments, I led the Foundation's senior leadership team in designing and implementing policy advocacy strategies. I believe strongly in the importance of data-driven public policy, and this conviction shaped my approach while leading the Gates Foundation's policy advocacy work. Driven by the strong evidence that improved agricultural productivity can have a transformative impact on rural communities, the Foundation chose to make agriculture a top priority, and it continues to be a major force helping to improve lives in poor countries through improved agriculture.

From 2007 until 2011, I was President and CEO of ONE, a non-partisan global organization committed to mobilizing public support for effective development and humanitarian policies. While there, I constantly heard how important the fight against poverty is to people all over the world and from all walks of life. In my experience, Americans from across our society -- students, businesspeople, members of diverse faith communities, Republicans, Democrats -- strongly support effective efforts - both in terms of cost and impact. Feeding the hungry is perhaps the most powerful charitable impulse of all. In every sector of development, people just want to know -- and deserve to know -- that the programs they support are making a difference. And they want to know that our focus is on creating long-term transformation and self-reliance, not only addressing short-term suffering.

I frequently traveled to Africa during my tenure at ONE. I saw for myself the critical linkages between agriculture and other aspects of economic and social development. These linkages confirmed my belief that smart policies and public investments from developed countries like ours must build on and work in concert with committed leadership from developing countries themselves. Without the two working in concert, investments will not be as effective or transformative.

I am also proud of other roles I've been given the opportunity to play in my career, especially those in the federal government. I believe my experience as a policy analyst, manager, convener, negotiator, and integrator of different perspectives would help me fulfill your expectations for this role.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the primary importance of my family in preparing me to serve my country in this important position, should the Senate confirm me. My parents, George and Mary Lou Lane, instilled in me a deep love of my country and a strong commitment to serve others. They were unable to travel to Washington, D.C, but I know they are proud that I'm being considered for a position that can help the United States make a difference for millions of people. I have four wonderful brothers and sisters and nine amazing nieces and nephews, some of whom are here today, and they will all tell you the same thing: my parents – by their example – taught us the true meaning of compassion, the importance of service, and the moral necessity of helping those who are less fortunate than we are.

I am particularly pleased to join my colleagues today who have been nominated for posts in Africa. Although the UN food agencies are based in Rome, the focus of their work must be in the field, especially Africa, which remains both the region of greatest concern and a potential source of long-term solutions. As I'm sure my fellow panelists know better than I, Africa is the only continent where agricultural productivity has remained stagnant for the past thirty years. And yet, there are countries in Africa where agriculture is on the brink of taking off, responding to strong leadership, smart new policies, and increased investment. Many believe that if we apply key lessons learned from recent experience we can dramatically increase agricultural productivity in Africa in the coming decade. This may offer the best chance we have to help lift tens of millions out of poverty and chronic hunger.

In recent years, leaders in both developing and developed countries have, in fact, reaffirmed the importance of agricultural development and prioritized it as an area of policy focus and investment. Recent government-led initiatives – The G-8’s L’Aquila Food Security Initiative, The Rome Principles for Sustainable Global Food Security, The AU’s Comprehensive African Agriculture Development Program, the G-20’s Global Agriculture and Food Security Program -- have given new momentum to the drive to feed the world’s hungry and lift millions of smallholder farmers out of poverty, and these efforts are beginning to show results. And civil society/NGO initiatives have long played a critical role addressing food security. In fact, according to one estimate, in 2008 U.S. NGOs that engaged in development work managed \$11.8 billion in private contributions and gifts-in-kind resources.

Seventy-five percent of the world’s poor live in rural settings and are dependent on agriculture, and most of these are women tending small plots of land. Studies have shown that growth in agriculture is three-to-six times more effective than growth in other sectors in raising the incomes of the very poor. The stakes are very high for getting this right, and I believe the UN food and agriculture agencies can play a vital role supporting and facilitating the transformation of agriculture around the world. At the end of the day, I am confident that the American people will support these efforts if they are having an impact in a cost effective way.

I would like to say a few words about the UN food and agriculture agencies – the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Program, and the International Fund for Agricultural Development. I realize many of you approach these and other large multilateral organizations with a fair amount of skepticism, and I believe past inefficiencies and other shortcomings confirm that we should take a firm approach to reform and renewal – something that the Mission in Rome is pursuing. But I also believe that these organizations are in a better position than they’ve been in a long time to pursue their missions effectively and efficiently and serve as reliable partners in combating hunger.

These three agencies – with dynamic leadership and a renewed commitment to their important mandates -- can and must play a critical role in continuing recent momentum behind food security. I believe now is the perfect time for these three agencies to sharpen their focus, clarify their roles, and improve their coordination,

and I am very optimistic that the U.S. Mission in Rome can work with these important agencies and align priorities in such a way that U.S. policies and investments have the shaping and even galvanizing influence we all hope to see.

While I am eager for your guidance on how best to advance U.S. policies and priorities in Rome, there are several issues that I believe will be important areas of focus if I am confirmed:

- 1) Ensuring that the humanitarian responses of the multilateral agencies are effective and efficient, even in the most challenging circumstances, while fostering resilience so that affected populations emerge less vulnerable after emergencies with the goal of breaking the cycle of disaster and expensive relief.
- 2) Building on the progress that has been made on food security in the past few years by ensuring that these agencies promote increased investments – both public and private, with a special emphasis on recruiting new donors – in initiatives and projects that contribute to developing resiliency and transform rural economies while fighting poverty.
- 3) Ensuring that efforts to reform the Rome-based U.N. agencies result in modern institutions that reduce redundancies, and are agile and responsive as well as efficient and transparent.
- 4) Using all the modern tools of public diplomacy to ensure that the leadership of the United States and great generosity of the American people in support of food and nutrition security and agricultural development is well understood around the world. This message is critical in underscoring our commitment to international peace, security, and development and can contribute to freedom, the development of democracy, and the promotion of good governance and market principles worldwide.
- 5) Ensuring that all the important day-do-day work of the U.S. Mission I've been nominated to lead – dealing with standards, norms, international agreements, etc. – is responsive to our national interests while generating positive results on the ground.

The work of the U.S. Mission to the food and agriculture agencies in Rome is only possible because of the generosity of the American people you represent and we all serve. The United States' leadership in this space has been in no small part the result of the continued determination by the branches of the United States government to promote food security internationally. For instance, the United States contributed approximately \$1.428 billion to the World Food Program in CY 2011, which alone made up 37% percent of WFP's budget. We were the single largest donor to the FAO in FY 2011, providing an assessed contribution of \$111 million – 22% of the assessed budget – and an additional \$66.67 million to FAO in extra-budgetary funding, mostly for emergency programs. We are also the largest donor to IFAD, at \$30 million per year.

Distinguished Members of the Committee, I am filled with pride when I think of the determination of the American people and the ability of the United States government – the Legislative and Executive branches alike – to join together to fight hunger worldwide. Since the emergency broke out last year in the Horn of Africa, in which drought affected parts of Ethiopia, Kenya, and Djibouti and famine was declared in five regions of Somalia, the United States has responded with more than \$1.1 billion in life-saving assistance, reaching an estimated 4.5 million people, many of whom would have otherwise died from starvation or related disease. As the specter of crisis rises once again, this time in the Sahel, I am sure the American people will continue to be in the vanguard of fighting it there as well.

As president of the G8 this year and host of the G8 Summit taking place this weekend at Camp David, the United States has been working with its partners to focus on food and nutrition security in sub-Saharan Africa. Building on the success of the 2009 G8 L'Aquila Food Security Initiative and the U.S. Feed the Future initiative, the G-8 effort will focus on continuing our commitments to the financial pledges made at L'Aquila and to following the Rome principles while also stimulating *private* investment in agriculture at all scales and across the agriculture value chain.

Working together, the actions taken by African governments, the AU, international partners, private investors, and civil society will substantially accelerate agricultural growth across the continent and help more than 50 million people

emerge from poverty over the next ten years. We believe that collectively, we can achieve this goal based on strong evidence that investments in agriculture – including CAADP Country Investment Plans and G8 actions – will significantly spur agricultural growth. This will be accomplished by working with African leaders to increase private capital investments in African agriculture, take innovations that can enhance agricultural productivity to scale, and reduce the risk borne by vulnerable economies and communities. We know from history and experience that agriculture-led growth resulting from these types of actions, paying special attention to small holder women farmers and to nutrition, is a powerful driver of broader economic growth and poverty reduction.

Clearly there is a role for the UN Rome-based agencies in G-8 food and nutrition security efforts, and, if confirmed, I will work to ensure that the agencies' contribution is effective, complementary, and appropriate to their strengths.

Distinguished Members of the Committee, I know the fiscal challenges we face, which is why, if confirmed, I would work to ensure that U.S. taxpayer provided resources are used to their fullest and with the greatest possible efficiency.

I thank you for your time and look forward to answering your questions.